

UMS: Bullet Dance

by JameyoftheMegacosmos

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Summary: The UMS units, the nightmare weapons against the sexist, militarist interstellar Nation of Misogn. Now the wielders must go back in time to a ravaged Earth to save them from utter annihilation. But can the PMC force of HEXI teach the Norma and the Dragons to pilot the only weapons that can save them? CROSSOVER WITH ORIGINAL WORK.

1. Chapter 1

Thought about writing this since I'm finished publishing my first book. I'm now switching to a new project that's been bottling up in my mind for quite and decided to let it out.

This new series is what I call UMS, or Upward Maniac Shooter, which is supposed to play homages to shoot em ups in a serious, but pretty much straightforward storyline. This came after watching a few series such as Strike Witches, Sky Girls, Infinite Stratos, the like. And all of these involved all-loving heroine girls who fight aliens and monsters, or each other on a usually harmless basis. This eventually got boring and lead me develop a series my own way.

The reason why I crossed this over with Cross Ange is not because of influence- this project was under development long before that came across- nor is it putting two favorite shows together. It's because CA was the closest out of all similar series to what I am searching for. While it does take young girls fighting huge wars realistically and seriously and has human enemies (my preferred kind of enemy), those enemies are fought indirectly and the majority of the battles are against the "alien" DRAGONS. UMS takes its fight with human enemies more directly, for the majority of the time, and all bloodshed and accomplishments are done with the cast's own hands. Now it's time to bring that to the cast of CA.

Time for the basis of the story, as well as establishing additional ideas for this.

* * *

><p>"Guess it's time, isn't it?"<p>

That voice came from a teenage girl within a room lined with lockers, each given keypads and handles to unlock and open the doors. She was within the center rows as she was finishing up changing into "normal" attire.

The woman was around 16 years old, yet sounded like someone older. She had long, dark blue black hair, with matching eyes and light skin complexion. Her suit was currently in was a silvery latex one with hexagonal patterns on the sides. There weren't any zippers on the back, but it felt tight enough it will stay on her all the time. She was finishing up putting on corresponding gloves and dark blue, tight flat boots were nearby.

She was speaking solemnly to a boy of similar age behind her. Should she turn around, she could only see his light skin complexion and short, light brown hair. He was just about ready, wear a latex suit himself, having primarily red colors with black and white linings around it. There was a long, think black strip with holes along the spinal cord and black, filleted cuffs around the wrists and ankles. He had a gold-colored neck guard and black casual boots on.

"Don't worry about," the teenage boy said with a soft, yet energetic tone. "It's not like we're going to be alone like most missions."

"We're dealing with time travel," the girl said coldly. "One screw up could affect the timeline as whole."

"We've read the history," the boy said, keeping his cheerful tone. "If it says in there, we should be destined to repeat it."

"That is if we repeat like it's supposed to."

"I said don't worry," the boy kept a cheerful voice, yet felt more sharp. As the girl turned around, so did he to show his bronze-ish eyes before closing them with a smile and a thumbs up. "History's on our side! We make it through and beat those bastards again."

The girl nodded and the boy responded the same way. But their moment was interrupted as the door slid open to reveal another character.

"MASTER!"

A girl came into the locker room with a dancing fashion. She had fairer skin that shone a gold aura and emerald eyes that fit with her happy personal. Her distinct features were her six insect-like wings on her back and elvish ears. Aside from a white swimsuit that covered her torso, she had about nothing else, leaving only her long, smooth blonde hair to cover anything.

The fairy-like girl danced towards the boy with his arms open. He tried to step back, but found himself glomped as she snuggled into him.

"I already told you before," Jack tried to hide his annoyance and she patted the fairy. "Call me Jack. That's fine enough."

"No!" The fairy girl protested. "You released me! You are I am your servant, Master Mitsu!"

Jack could only pale from the comment, but the girl intervened, trying to pull the fairy away.

"That's enough! If you don't have anything to report, then you can get out here right now! And if it's just to hug your 'master', then-" the girl raised a fist and gave a scary look. "I'll make sure you don't not lay a fight on him again."

The fairy girl broke away and panicked. She repeatedly bowed back to the other girl.

"S-Sorry, Ms. Ami Exti!"

"Settle down, Miclus," Jack called out to the fairy. "Remember that she's always like this to keep everyone safe. No need to be sorry over it."

"Sorry, Master Mitsu!"

"You apologize much."

"Sorry, Master Mitsu!"

"Enough," Ami cut in. "State your purpose of barging into this place."

Miclus calmed down afterward to report.

"It's the Big Boss. She wants you report to the bridge right away."

"Tell her not to worry about it," Jack assured as he adjusted his right glove. "We just finished dressing up, so we're more than ready."

"Y-Yes, Master," Miclus bowed before taking off in mid-air. She floated through the automatically sliding door and disappeared into the side hallway.

"Let's go," Ami proceeded first out of the locker rooms.

* * *

><p>A command bridge was becoming lively as the crew either being gathered and operating the equipment. It was composed of two floors, the bottom floor being larger and longer section. Screens were aligned along the outer side walls of the bridge with only consoles in the front section where a much larger flat-screen was that overlooked space. Two screens with seat were set in one row closer to the flat screen and three more sets were in another row close to the higher levels of the bridge. On the higher section of the bridge were half a hexagon of consoles and screens. In the center, up against the wall, was the main command chair. It was specially featured with a console on the armrest and circular, rotating platform that was

connected to the room behind.<p>

Sitting in this special seat was the labeled Big Boss of the ship. Although a woman, she wore a dark green men's uniform with given decorations. She had short, box-cut white hair and a light scar by her dark green eyes. Though her arms were more than intact, there metal bracers on her right forearm that were signs of scarring injuries.

She was given the name Big Boss due to her role as a military commander and its gender ambiguity. In fact, like the majority of the crew onboard, she were discharged and resigned veterans from an interstellar military force. After years of fighting and hell from the said military force, she and other together formed a group for their own cause, labeling itself as HEXI.

With it, the Big Boss was the main commander of HEXI's main flagship, the Hexia. It could be best described as a long, hexagonal platform with short and shrinking levels below. Each trapezoidal side had a square thruster that propelled green energy, something that was also lined up along the ship. On the back were two green light-emitting engines that were connected by the rear, outward from the main hull, and were square in design. On top of the main hexagonal platform were the rest of the equipment: projectile-based armament such as missiles and turrets were outermost on the sides. More internally were landing and launching bays from the front and back. Below the bays were two concealed main energy cannons at the front and an additional one on the back. Finally sticking out at the front was a long nose that served as the command bridge.

As of now, the Hexi was out in space, overlooking from a vast distance with its advanced sensor array. It's area of interest was a habitable planet that was heavily occupied by military forces. The Big Boss was checking their status as strange signatures were being emitted, something that addressed serious concern from the PMC group. Putting the console out, she activated the switch to rotate the platform.

The chair relocated itself from the bridge to another long, hexagonal room. This was more like a meeting offices with a similarly shaped table with screens, which were also projected on the side walls.

The captain rested on the seat as she waited for the other key members to show up. Jack, Ami and Miclus were three of the crucial members as they just arrived outside the door on the other side of the room. However, five other members were present who were just as critical.

With the exception of Miclus, the other big six were pilots of the Hexia's stored craft, transforming fighter-like armor known shortly known as UMS units. While the Hexia provided command, these ships did most of the fighting as they were capable of tearing through entire fleets all by themselves. Though each had their limitations, each individual had to be reckoned with.

Of course, all attacks needed to be planned first. The Hexia took care of all refueling, repairing, and reloading before the UMS users went off into their next fight. As the commander, the Big Boss gave out the next missions and targets in the meanwhile.

Of course, this is more of she was forced to do this. After all, it was actually Jack and Ami who proposed the initial objective in their attacks, eliminating the military forces that belonged to the interstellar Nation of Misogn. Due to the immense and overgrown military force, it became a serious problem for other worlds and their military conquests had to stop.

But now, there was an ever bigger problem as the team was about to discuss. Before then, the Boss declared.

"I assume everyone is here and accounted for?"

"Apparently so," Jack looked around, though looked around as he noticed a few people missing. "Though where are the pirate girls and Moriko?"

"Moriko won't be joining us. He is off with the pirates elsewhere. You've read about their leave of absence, didn't you?"

"Well, uh-" Jack rubbed his back in his embarrassment.

"Can we just get to the briefing...Boss?" Ami spoke, ending reluctantly, showing she wasn't a direct member of the crew. "The more we spend time bickering, the more likely those militarists are gonna screw up the more than just the timeline."

"Agreed," the Boss nodded. Her chair shifted to the left as she stood up. She walked around the chair as maps of enemy fleet movements and the planet of interest, which also appeared on the screens within the table.

"As of now, the Misognians are on the verge of launching their full-scale invasion. It is large enough to overwhelm all of us, just as it will- or it would with our intended allies."

More signatures appeared on the screen, appearing more on the surface of the planet.

"What makes this more so is that they have already given the inhabitants their manufacturing and combat weaponry. Considering how comparable their machines were to our own, this is expected, but more of the reason not to engage them."

The screen zoomed in down closer to the surface. In the atmosphere, near where clouds were huge circular gate was hovering in midair, guarded by a couple squadrons of warships. On the screens, it was the source of the unusual signature found on the planet, identified as a type of time-space distortion.

"Just now, the temporal gateway they've created that we've labeled "Umbilical Cord" has activated. We're already too late to stop them before the invasion, but we can still beat them here."

"Then how do we stop them?"

That answer came from another girl, sitting in the right seat on the opposite side of the table. She was around 14 years old with pale skin, pink/magenta pigtails and emerald eyes. She was more dressed than Miclus, wearing a white skirt and white latex gloves and short leggings. For accessories, she wore a few bracelets of leaves and

insect shells that shone like jewels. A few flying bugs that rested harmlessly on her shoulders.

"Simple, we reenact history," the Boss answered as parts of the gateway were colored red. "If we can't stop the invasion, then we'll prepare long before it. And the Umbilical Cord will be key to the operation."

"Can we even do that?"

That came from an 11-year old girl with short red tails and matching eyes, sitting on the left seat opposite of the Boss. She had filleted cuffs on her wrists and ankles as well as black strip on her back much like Jack's. However, her outfit was more dark blue with spots and linings of neon yellow. She also had additional black straps, circling her shoulders, waist and knees.

Jack came to pat the young girl to her surprise.

"Don't worry about it. History is on our side, isn't that right, Boss?"

The Boss nodded.

"Indeed, just as how the gateway will be the catalyst to the invasion, it was also be so for stopping it. All we need to do is capture it long enough for us to move through. Ami and Miclus will take care of that, won't you?"

Ami nodded while Miclus bowed and said.

"Anything for my Master's Master!"

The Boss chuckled before continuing.

"Of course, we must get to it first, let alone pass through its defenses."

The screen zoomed out of the planet, showing the enemy defensive lines guarding the gateway and arrows corresponding to the UMS units and Hexia.

"Here's the current battle plan. As usual, Jack, Ami and Miclus will spearhead the attack through the enemy lines. As usual, cause has much destruction of the enemy fleets as you can as you progress through to the gateway."

As the main trio nodded affirmatively, the Boss turned to the red short-tailed girl and called out to her.

"Hiltrud."

"Yes?"

"You will be in the center of our line of attack. Your job is to attack stragglers and keep the Misognian forces off our flagship as she advances. That includes defending her if she ever comes under attack. Understand?"

"Y-Yes," Hiltrud nodded.

"Of course, your responsibility won't be limited to just that. Should Ami, Jack and Miclus have trouble, you're free to assist them. So long as you stay by the Hexia for support. And that leaves you three."

She first went to the insect girl.

"Kore," the Books called to her before going to the other pair of pilots, who were standing by the other side of the wall.

One was a little taller than the other, having long blonde hair to her bust and light blue eyes. She wore a blue officer uniform, though she lacked pants and only had black straps on her ankles. Black swimwear was shown underneath her suit.

The other one had short brown hair down to her neck and hazel eyes. She was flat chested, though her partner was only little more, and had fairer skin to the blonde's light. She wore similar attire, but her officer suit was tannish and wore black women's swim shorts.

"Tasmin," The Boss called to the blonde one before going to her nearby squadmate. "Lambert."

The two stood straight in front of their commander.

"You three will prepare for deployment as soon as we enter the planet's atmosphere. You'll be launch as soon as we reach the height as the gateway. You are to assist Jack as she clears the way for Ami and Miclus to the control center and defends it thereafter. Keep those Misognians off the gateway until the pair are done, understand?"

"Yes!" The three affirmed.

"Of course," Ami entered in. "This is the current plan. I assume things will change if something sudden occurs."

"Aside from the native lackeys who the Misognians are supplying, there shouldn't be too much difficulty."

"What about them?" Jack was referring to a certain duo, though one is a dog more or less. Despite that, both were known to UMS pilots he and Ami were well aware about.

"That is true. But knowing your experience in fighting them, I know that you'll pull it off either way. Am I clear with that?"

Jack nodded. Ami still had her concerns.

"I still have a personal grudge with whoever the people those damn militarists are supporting. What was the planet called again?"

"Based on whatever sources we could find, it's only identified as 'Mana'. As vicious as they are like the Misognians, don't that grudge overcome you."

Ami nodded, though folded arms remained tight.

"Any more questions?" The room was silent as the Boss concluded the meeting. "Alright then, UMS users, SCRAMBLE!"

* * *

><p>Jack was by the side of the Port launch bay. The majority of it was the strip where the UMS units would land, the entrances and exits having that field that kept oxygen within the ship, though not weapon fire. There were two rails that went across the strip, though at the center were two rotating circles that went to perpendicular rails. Those went to a network of railings and circles where UMS units and sometimes other aircraft were stored.<p>

Jack walked by the columns of the UMS units. Each one was a humanoid exoskeleton of destructive power for those who used them. While nearly anyone can operate it so long as they had power, because of its normally high consumption of energy, only the optimal pilots were able to use it best. The majority of these pilots were girls, though Jack was a significant exception.

Standing by him, in the center of 9 given columns for 3 units each (a number of spots were unoccupied), was his main unit known as the Thunder. The main body of the unit resembled a delta wing aircraft without its engines and some of its weapons, particularly the guns, which were on two separate sections where the hands would go. Anything that resembled engines were on two other sections where a person's legs would go. Like his unit, it was very red in design with black linings along the back hull. There were also two white, rectangular section on the front, which were actually air intakes for planetary operations. All five sections were connected by cords that provided power to all systems and had some sort of folded tube that would surround the user.

Jack watched over his unit with arms crossed. Thanks to his joy over the UMSS and the simulation games he played with them, on top of his practical usage of his particular unit, he was a recognized elite by his own right. Though not as special as the other units, it helped him get out of sticky situations for both himself and his allies. With that, he could show pride with his precious toy.

He failed to realized soon that a younger pilot was entering the launch bay. She went around the rows of stored UMS units, yet couldn't keep her eye off of them. She was most interested in those that occupied the first spots.

"Whose are these?" Hiltrud asked by the side, surprising Jack as he jerked to her.

"H-Hiltrud!"

"I never seen these units before. Who's going to pilot them?"

After seeing what she was pointing to, Jack replied.

"Oh, those? We salvaged them from the previous battles and modified them ourselves. They are for our special guests," Jack answered.

"You mean, these are gonna be-"

"That's right, they're for the Norma and DRAGONS'. They'll need them for the battles ahead. Without them, they'll be sure to get slaughtered."

Hiltrud turned back to the new UMS ships in awe. Like Jack, she had pride in her own UMS unit, but could easily fall to other special units that came out one after another and before her eyes. And what's more surprising is who'll be flying them first- historically, that is.

"Can't believe we're actually doing this," Hiltrud said. "Though we putting our energy into it, it feels like there's no need since it already happened."

"Better to put in some effort than no effort at all. After all, it's our responsibility to fight off against our own people from invading other countries. And those Norma and DRAGONS have no intent to go down without a fight."

"Of course not! And neither will we!"

Jack nodded as Hiltrud went up to her own UMS unit next column over, which was blue with linings of neon yellow that matched her pilot suit and two high wings. Named the Strongarm (or to her the Starkwaffe), her's was a special kind as it had a large mechanical arm like those found in powered armor, ending with claws for each of the fingers. The other arm was normal with a powered hand. There were also no leg sections, so the user could walk on foot if she wished.

"You gonna launch here, too?"

"Boss said I'll go after you," Hiltrud told him. "Good luck out there!"

"We got this," Jack gave a thumbs up and a wink. "Don't you fret!"

Hiltrud nodded as Jack proceed into his UMS.

After climbing onto the platform that held the UMS into its humanoid position, Jack started by inserting his feet into the leg sections. Once they fit in comfortably, he reached to the top inside the main body and pressed a button that lit up. He stood up straight as the unit clung onto him from the back and started attaching plugs into the holes of strip along the spinal cord. Once they were all felt in place, red energy lined up along the cords and some linings were lit as the unit went active. The leg sections locked his feet in and Jack reached for brought his arms out for the hand sections that did the same. A moment after the hand sections were released from its restraints, a translucent, gold screen slid in front of Jack that opened up the unit's interface.

The screen showed all systems ready as the Boss opened up.

"You ready?"

"Yes, my unit's working like usual."

"That is even without Miclus around."

"She'll be coming for sure. It's not like I'm gonna leave her."

"Very well, see to it before you take off."

The screen closed as the platforms moved along the railings towards launching area. Jack could feel even the posts that keep the humanoid suit upright pushing him forward. In the meantime, Ami appeared on the interface with a dark background aside a few lines and screens.

"Ami?"

"I'll be launching first, you and the fairy follow behind me."

"Relax, it's not like I'm going anywhere without you."

"You better. Don't let your naivety sidetrack you."

"Hey!"

"That's enough," the Boss talked her down. "Ami, are ready for launch?"

"Yes, ma'am. Transformation into Fighter Mode is successful. Vacuum Jacket is closed and sealed."

"Understood. Catapult system on, you're all clear."

"Aether unit, launching!"

A loud pitch of high energy could be heard as Ami's UMS unit launched out of the Starboard Launch Bay. Jack could was able to see the streaks of blue energy trailing her as his unit finally faced the exit. He then proceed to transform into the unit's Fighter Mode as well.

Preparation of this mode came when something came down the ceiling and held the platform by the bottom. The whole UMS turned with the platform at an 90 degree angle, Jack's head facing the exit, and lifted off the ground a little. Using the hand sections that emitted small lights, Jack kept the unit in a stable, flat level. He also used those on the leg sections as soon as they were released.

He then initiated the procedure for the Flight Mode.

"Flight Mode," he called out as the interface confirmed.

Jack put his legs together that locked each other in place. He moved his feet around as he could sense the energy and resulting changing angles. He could also feel his legs move as a whole if he wanted to, unlike many UMS units, but decided to keep them straight. He afterward the hand sections of the unit onto the main body in front of him, as if he could see his hands. He also activated the necessary smaller thrusters that pushed downward to keep himself level, though it was easy due to almost no gravity. The interface slid back to the front, showing the completion of its transformation into Flight

Mode.

Just as he was ready to go, he could hear Miclus coming into the launch bay. He found the fairy girl floating towards him.

"Master! Wait for me!"

"Miclus, are you ready?"

"Yes!"

Miclus's excited self then turned into a more calm one as she clasped her hands together. Her body then faded into a bright gold figure of energy that went straight into the Thunder unit. The UMS was engulfed as the interface detected transformations being done on it. The wings were becoming more sharp, the interior section more blocky as missile backs started to appear, as did guns on all sections of the unit.

The gold auras faded as the Thunder unit reported its completed transformation along with its given features. Well, now under this buff, it was dubbed the Thunder II.

The Boss's voice was heard once more.

"The fairy did her magic again, assume?"

"Yep, Flight Mode and Thunder II Transformations are successful."

Jack activated the Vacuum Jackets as it covered the rest of his body, connecting to the screen as well, which would be pretty much his interval of naked visibility. He took a sigh of relief about not forgetting it and reported.

"Vacuum Jacket is closed and sealed. Propulsion Emitters gathering energy."

Gold colors of said energy was gathering on the feet of the leg sections.

"Understood. Catapult system on, you're all clear."

Jack took a deep breath as green-blue lights went along the catapult.

"Roger. Thunder II unit, launching!"

The Thunder II unit then rocketed through the Launch Bay, past in the invisible life support field, and out into the space. Once he was far enough away from the Hexia, he altered his feet to turn the UMS unit.

As he was within distance of Ami, he also detected many energy signatures up in front. This got Jack pumped as declared.

"Alright, let's rock this out!"

* * *

><p>On a planet elsewhere, years into the pastâ€|<p>

In a large arcade, an old game was being played. On the screen was a blue ship with some kind of arm on the under belly that carried a large weapon. The ship jerked around as it fired its bullets in a wave. It was attacking tanks on the ground and aircraft that went at quite fast speeds. While the enemies were getting destroyed by the tens, they fired dots just as many, depicted to be dangerous shots.

The weapon on the blue ship's arm fell off as it was depleted of energy. It continued to fire its yellow bullets that were slower, but did significant damage to smaller enemies. A larger enemy that was pretty much a walking tank fired a powerful cannon that went faster speeds. The head of the machine fired additional spray of slower dots as they scattered around the blue ship. Jerking to avoid the shots, the blue ship continued to fire at the walking tank until it was destroyed. The cannon got left behind, which the blue ship proceed to take it.

As the cannon got collected, more enemies came from both sides of the screen. The ship rose upward and fought against the enemies up at the front while avoid the bullets. And thenâ€|

The ship collided with a platform above, causing it to crash and burn. The screen faded out into black and a "CONTINUE?" screen showed up.

The girl playing it slammed her fist on the controls.

"Err, why the hell did they ever create games like this!?"

The player was wearing all white like a few similar girls around. Though it included a long coat, it was somewhat revealing by the arms and bust height. She had red twintails, matching eyes, and white skin. Said eyes were still twitching over the sudden loss as the "CONTINUE?" Screen went to a "GAME OVER".

The redhead was quite aggravated at the kind of games she was playing. For a few days, she was intrigued upon learning a series of games known as "shooters". Well, there many kinds of shooter games, but the ones that intrigued her the most were also described as "bullet hell". Said games were still popular even after centuries, but they were nonetheless frustrating.

The game was not qualified for a bullet hell, but the challenge was just as high. The challenging part were obstacles that can destroy the player's ship, meaning it was a maze with the walls being death traps, let alone colliding with other enemies. Although she could that made the game realistic, it provided just as much aggravation as the bullet hells were.

"I swear, whatever Ancient Human thought they were playable were insane."

She deliberately used the term Ancient Human as that's what people now were. While they lived on what was called the "True Earth", the normal humans who lived there were practically gone. All what one called human were actually mutated and genetically engineered variants of the human race. The majority of them had horns and tails,

named dragons for obvious reasons. The others- about all who wore the white outfits- were known as Norma, who were refugees of their past world.

Actually, "refugees" was a semi-correct term for the Norma. The world they lived on was Hell for them as they were treated severely as outcasts of society. They were beaten, cut, whipped, and perhaps even done even worse by the majority of the people on their former world. Almost all of them had things in common: they rejected a type of power the majority their former home world's populace, and were quarantined on a remote island that served as their only place of residence. And that place of residence couldn't be called home as they fought endless droves of dragons that served as fuel for their slave masters' power and made the Norma their lunch.

Of course, that conflict was finally over and the two belligerents were friends, living together in a harmonious world. That was in their view at least. The Earth was actually covered in radioactive, mutating substance known as Dracium, spread from a war that caused the original man to go extinct in the first place. The Dragons were one of the few descendents at the cleaned Earth of its waste, converting into the clean, harmless fuel it was supposed to be. Fixing the current problems of this world was more than enough to make this world a utopia by its own right.

Recalling said friends, a young dragon with pink hair jumped a little from the redhead's outburst. Upon noticing, the Norma girl patted the Dragon girl on her head.

"Sorry about that, Vivian."

"Your apology is accepted, Ms. Schlievogt."

The redhead girl twitched from that comment. It was with agitation again and a little surprise.

"Now that's quite new."

"W-What?"

"You suddenly called me by a original last name. When did _that_ come along?"

"I-I don't know. It just...occured to me."

"Well then, I suggest to you just call me 'Hilda'. Just as how I always called you 'Vivian' instead of 'Mii'."

"We're not in Mana anymore, Hildegard. There's no more need to be shameful of that name anymore."

"Shameful? What are you nuts? Mana or Earth, that name has a scarring history we agree not to go back on."

"Well, not everyone seems to get the message. Momoka?"

"She's...an exception."

"Stillâ€¦I don't know how to say it. But my gut feeling tells me in order to leave the past behind for real...maybe we should stop hating

our old names."

Hilda backed away, still not buying the statement. But something else got into her mind.

"Speaking of Momoka, I think it's time to see Ange for a while."

"Sure! It's her birthday after all!"

* * *

><p>In a nearby housing, one of few still standing, there lived a little restaurant that was labeled "Cafe Ange" in huge words.<p>

Inside was a standard maid where most of the crowd were gathering together. The employees of the shop wore maid outfits. Others were wearing much more normal clothing, including the head runners of the cafe.

The manager was a blonde girl who recently entered the restaurant. Beside her was a best...boy with short brown hair and another maid with short, purple hair.

All those coming to greet her were more than just employees. About everyone in the dining area was a Norma or a comrade of them. That included Emma Bronson, who sat more by the corner, wearing a large costume with a dog-like head by the side.

"Looks like you have quite a greeting, Angelise-sama." The maid named Momoka Oginome commented beside her manager.

Angelise, or who most people refer to as 'Ange', twitched at the comment. But her mind was more focused on the company given to her, which was somewhat expected.

"Why, hey everyone!" A twin-tailed black-haired girl named Salia spoke through a microphone, wearing a frilly dress. "The princess...no, Empress has finally returned!"

Ange twitched even more by that statement, even as everyone cheered and gave toasts to her. What she bugged her more was not about the princess stuff, but how it's happening so suddenly. So quickly. Momoka was one person, but now even the Norma are calling her that and as something to praise instead of mocking.

"Can't believe how things are changing like this. So out of the blue," Ange murmured before sighing. "Guess old habits die hard."

"I don't know," her best man Tusk tried to tame her. "I think they're just trying to make up for everything you went through."

"Don't you think they're overdoing it?"

"Just relax, Ange," Tusk talked to her with her more comfortable name. "After all, it is your birthday."

"Yes."

The _last_ birthday was something she wanted to forget. The last one, she lost nearly everything and got sent to a prison island where she tortured for most of her life. But now, all of these people were her friends and she can finally live on.

She looked around the room as saw there were some people absent. A few she knew wouldn't come because she just meet them a while ago, being Salamanidary, her guards and the other officials within the Dragon societies of Japan. Another was Ersha, who recently withdrew from the cafe to find a place for children, whether it be an orphanage or a school. The other important ones were Hilda and Vivian, who said they went their own way to an arcade.

"And besides," Tusk added. "If you're playing politics, negotiations, doctor and what not, then what else would you call yourself?"

Ange gave Tusk a nudge, which was lighter than normal, while trying to keep a straight face. She pretended she didn't hear that as she proceeded further inside the cafe.

"And how did the negotiations go?" A similar blonde woman named Rosalie asked, her arms wrapped around braided, white-haired Chris.

"Fine," Ange responded.

"That's it? We've prepared this whole thing for you and that's all you give us?"

"I meant the negotiations went great. I talked to Sala and Aura this morning. They said that they're planning some kind of travel route between us and their nearest ports. Oh, and there's this."

Ange reached into a bag while calling Momoka.

"Momoka, could you bother to hand out those things that dragon scientist gave us?"

"At once, Angelise-sama."

"I'll help, too."

Tusk and Momoka reached into their own bags as they took out set of smart phones. They all tossed one to each person, except for Salia, who was a bit far.

Emma was more curious to what she was being given when she near clumsily caught the phone, forgetting that she was still in the costume. She used both her huge hand and trap the phone before it could fall onto the floor and carefully placed it on the table. Taking her arms out, she held the smart phone with her bare hands. After pressing a button, the screen showed an easy slide-to-unlock measure.

"Finally," Emma said to herself. "Some kind of tech I'm familiar with."

And just like that, Emma was already glued to her interest in the smart phone. After Salia received hers by hand from Ange, the "empress" stated.

"Just recently, the Dragons managed to get some telecommunications working again. Because of the war, it took forever for them due to lack of resources. But with the war over, they diverted their stuff to something else, including these. Enjoy!"

There were some giggles in the room, but Salia wanted to continue along.

"Well anyway, we're here to give one big present to Ms. Ange! Coming out...now!"

A couple maids came out with a huge white cake, composed of three layers. The first two had eight candles while a final one on top. Ange turned around to find the cake right in front of her. She had a sense of discomfort with the cake and other surprises brought right up to her.

"Make a wish," Tusk suddenly told her.

"Huh?" Ange jumped to what he wanted her to do.

"Salako told me about this. She said usually when one has a birthday, you make a wish before blowing out the candles."

"My wish, hmmm."

Last wish recalled was she wished for a challenge. And that turned into a curse for her. But she narrowed down to one in her mind.

"I wish...I just wish for no more surprises."

That was a wish she thought was worth sharing to everyone else. After all the trouble they went through- all that she went through- they can live peacefully without any sudden interference. She took a deep breath in attempt to blow out the candles...

BOOM!

An explosion suddenly shook the ground. Everyone grabbed onto something upon realization. Chris and Rosalie held each other and Salia fell onto the ground.

"Wha...What's happening!?"

The quake went down afterward and everyone took a while to feel at ease. If anyone was more at ease, it was the maid girls relieved over the cake not spilling, though all the candles went out.

Ange looked around. It was also relieving that the place didn't collapse on itself. It was their home for a few months and was not something she was gonna lose so easily.

Although the Norma were told about earthquakes in Japan, this was less of that and more like something huge just hit the ground.

"What was that?" Chris asked.

Ange wasn't sure either. If anything could shake Cafe Ange. it would have to be something big or something close. Only one way to find

out.

"Everyone outside."

* * *

><p>What rocked Japan on the True Earth was unexpected to put it lightly. For the long, black-haired dragon, High Priestess Salako, it was quite hideous. What was even more hideous was the kind of damage it dealt. And it wasn't what or where it impacted, but who it impacted on.

Salako and her two guards saw the whole thing. Aura, the large white Dragon who someone would call a god of the True Earth, was victim to it as she unlikely went on her stroll across the skies. At that moment, some kind of temporal distortion opened up perpendicular that causes Aura's flight to stop in front of it. That because a bad move as the nose of a giant spaceship impacted her head as both descended onto the ground. Aura hit the ground first, but the ship crash landed very close, as the hull shadowed over her.

Salako immediately called in nearby medical forces in the area, including Dr. Gecko, to check out the area. She had a strong feeling that Aura was not dead, but it was important even for Dragons like them to check their health.

More Dragons came into the scene, including some Norma, who were all stunned by the sudden state of Aura. Hilda and Vivian were the closest as the Norma froze in her place and the Dragon watched in horror at the fallen leader. Ersha was also nearby, also freezing in shock at the huge ship that just crashed in. Salako approached the ship's hull with their guards and scaled it as they readied their weapons.

On the rear of the ship, the three Dragons could hear voices. It sounded like chatter from attacking, digging in, or any of the sort. No, it sounded more like bickering.

"I told you that boy was gonna screw everything up!" A certain blonde officer, Tasmin, was talking to Lambert.

"It wasn't his fault! We failed to stop them from seizing the gate controls and let them screw with the coordinates."

"Oh, you're saying that it's _our_ fault here?"

"No, it's just that-"

"How much are you going to argue over there?"

Salako was already getting annoyed by the bickering by the two strange officers. The two were already quick to draw weapons for defense, Tasmin wielding what Salako identified as an American M4 and Lambert an M249 light machine gun. They had battlefield experience for sure and had officer uniforms, Salako thought of the uniforms being just for show, scoffing at how they wore the suit but not the pants.

"W-Who are you?" Lambert asked.

"I think we should be asking the same question," Kaname of Sala's guards replied back.

* * *

><p>Hiltrud got up on the front of the ship. She was still wearing her Strongarm unit, her right arm wielding a Vulcan gun from the previous battle. As she regained her balance, she checked her surrounding as the status of the ship and its crew.<p>

To go through the chatter about people surrounding their downed flagship, Hiltrud analyzed the area personally. No one seemed to have pulled out any weapons on the other side, but huge numbers of surrounding people made her cautious.

"Uhh, everyone? I think we have company here."

Hiltrud raised her Vulcan gun a little to prepare herself for any sudden hostilities. She also walked closer to the starboard edge of the ship in order to get a better angle.

"Don't shoot, Hiltrud!" A voice came from the comm line who was clearly her Boss. "We are not to engage our potential allies here. Any attack will start unnecessary hostilities. I repeat, do not shoot!"

At this point, Hiltrud was stuck between following the Boss's orders and protecting herself. She already had some experience being taken prisoner all of a sudden and being locked in a cage. She was not going to dull her self-awareness again.

Overlooking the UMS user was Hilda and Vivian.

All Hilda could say was, "What the hell!?"

"What is that?" Her dragon friend watched the huge ship that just came in. "Is that...a Mana vessel?"

"It can't be. We know what happened to them."

"But look at the lines of the ship," Vivian pointed out. "You'd think it would be powered by Mana or something."

The dragon girl then noticed who the ship nearly landed on.

"Aura!" Vivian called, but Hilda held her back. They were left to analyze the ship that just came in.

The pair then got a glimpse of the humanoid machine that started overlooking from the top of the ship. Both were surprised that a young girl even by Norma's standards during the Dragon War would be piloting an exoskeleton, not to mention wield a heavy weapon like a Vulcan gun. Hilda was even more surprised by the girl's physical appearance. Obviously, she looked like her from a younger age, but not too young. There were also some key differences, such as having shorter hair, a blue outfit and less revealing clothing. But she also resembled something else, as if she just saw it not so long ago.

"What is going on here?" Hilda murmured to herself.

Vivian escaped her grasp and continued to run towards the ship.

"Vivian!"

"I'm gonna see what's up with that girl!"

"Hold on!"

* * *

><p>"Pretty rough entry, eh?" Jack tried to make a joke out of a rough situation, only receiving a glare from Ami.<p>

Unlike everyone else who stayed with the flagship when everything went wrong, the main trio were sent through a wormhole to a different part of the planet. Both were stuck in their UMS units as they landed, forcing to disengage the Vacuum Jackets and and disconnect from the units through emergency means.

You'd think they'd design the unit so it would walk on land just like Hiltrud's, the male user thought when they activated the emergency release.

This also caused Miclus to leave the Thunder unit.

"Waahh, I feel dizzy," the fairy stumbled, barely keeping her footing. She finally collapsed onto her knees.

Ami was standing by her own UMS, the Aether unit. The main body was quite angular and had sharp points sticking out. In front were additional side fins and some kind of cannon in between. The leg sections were blocky with blue colors and large green lights, both located on the front and back. The arms were of similar design as was two flight-capable drones that laid with the unit.

Ami held a circular device in her right hand that was searching the area.

"Nothing of ours shows up on the sensors. There are traces of old communication lines, but nothing that is the Hexia or the other units."

"You think we landed at another location."

"Maybe," Ami had a scary glare against Jack. "Or we may have warped ourselves into a different time period."

"Different time period!?" Miclus jumped. "You mean we went to the war with the Galactic Union and the Empires!? Or are starting life all over again with male and one fe-"

"Settle down, Miclus," Jack patted the fairy to calm her down. He let his hand out to show ruins of destroyed buildings. "If we really went to prehistoric times, then we wouldn't see this. And Ami, you said you picked up communication lines, yes?"

"Yes, but that doesn't disprove that we're in a different era."

"Relax there, Ami. The records show we were able to make history as it is. If only we stay positive and believe we might get here like everybody else-"

He got distracted when Ami diverted her attention to something behind her.

"What's going on here?" Someone called out from behind in a quite threatening voice.

Jack and Miclus turned to see a group of women walking towards them. They were lead by a blonde one woman, flanked by a purple-haired maid, and a well-suited man with brown hair. Obviously, they were unhappy with their sudden arrival.

Ami went into a defensive stance and Miclus hid scared behind Jack, who was unsure of what to do. The other girls responded to Ami, the blonde one even drawing out a gun. Jack then raised out a hand to them.

"Hold on, we're not here to harm to you!"

"What makes you so sure?" The leader of the women asked him.

"Look right here," Jack showed their two UMS units. "We're just outlanders who came across here. All we need is some help."

The blonde leader lowered her gun a little.

"Are you sure you won't turn on us?"

"What makes you think we'll do?" Ami threatened.

"What makes you think we won't stand down?"

"Because you won't like the kind of stuff we're capable of."

And that undid the first attempts to heal an already rough start with the current natives. Jack only wished that sooner or later, something would show up to fix even that.

* * *

><p>The standoff was already tense between the three Dragons and the two new arrivals.<p>

Salako analyzed the two who stood before them. They had battle experience for sure and had weapons that surpassed theirs. But while they had battle experience, so did Salako and her guards. The two looked like normal humans whereas the trio were Dragons in humans, far stronger and more agile and a normal person. Plus, they had a one man advantage to assist them.

Though that advantage disappeared when a pink-haired girl stumbled on the right. They all turned to another girl with long, magenta-pink twintails.

"Kore!" the two arrivals called out to her.

Salako was a little surprised by this new arrival. For one thing, she was the pair's ally, dressed in clothes that would be made from a jungle. She could assume by their tradition that she was somewhat dressed like royalty. But the special and even frightening part were the swarms of insects that came from behind, all of them shrouding the woman in a huge ring.

"I'm fine," Kore got to her feet, stopping upon the sight of Salako and her guards. "W-Who are these people?"

"We should be asking you the same question," Salako told her. "Why did you come here? And why did you _land_ here of all places?"

"Land here?" Tasmin got confused. "What are you saying?"

"Your ship hit our sacred leader in the head and nearly crushed her on the way down," Naga responded. "Do you think we'll just let you get away with that?"

"Aura?" Kore was just as confused. "Who's Aura?"

Salako pointed behind them. Three arrivals walked past the three, though Tasmin and Lambert cautiously kept their weapons at the guards' throats. They all took one quick glimpse at Aura, the massive white dragon that got knocked thanks to their ship. Tasmin had a sharper understand of how pissed off the natives were.

"Ohâ€¦|"

"P-Please forgive us for this," Kore turned around, holding her hands together and bowing with a plea. "Our mission went wrong as we landed out of coincidence!"

"We'll see," Salako took the plea understandably. "As long as Aura lives."

"So what will you do now?" Tasmin asked the Dragon princess.

"For now, we have a large discussion we want with you and want to know why and how you three got here."

Kore nodded, but Lambert added.

"We have more people with us. I don't know what their status is, but we can't just leave them."

"Very well. Gather up everyone else then. After that, we'll talk."

* * *

><p>Hiltrud aimed her Vulcan gun downward, yet in the direction of the two girls who came to her. She was surprised to see both girls. But while surprised about the pink one's comparable personality as well as her dragon characteristics, she was more so with the redhead. She even thought if the woman was her from the future, but she knew it could be possible.<p>

"W-Who are you?" Hiltrud hesitantly asked the two trespassers.

"We're asking you the same question" the redhead responded.

Hiltrud raised her weapon again, bending her Boss's orders.

"Tell me, what's your name?"

The two silent at first, but the pink-haired one answered.

"I'm...Mii. But everyone calls me Vivian."

Hiltrud turned to the redhead, who was quick to reply.

"Call me Hilda."

"Hilda?"

Is this a coincidence? Hiltrud thought. First similar characters and now a comparable name.

"Now care to give us _your_ name."

"It's Hiltrud."

And gave Hilda the same reason, just as Hiltrud predicted.

"But-" Hilda wanted to speak, but Vivian interrupted.

"How are you carrying that?"

"This?"

"Yeah, that huge gun? And what's with the cool, blue armor?"

"Well, uh..."

Hiltrud got interrupted by the communication line, which was the two guests overheard.

"That's enough, Hiltrud."

"Boss?"

"We've already caused enough of a mess. Aiming your weapons at them at close range will only make the matter worse. Drop the weapon."

Hiltrud sighed and complied to her Boss. Vivian continued with the questions.

"Well...what is it?"

"This?" Hiltrud thought she was still talking about her UMS. "It's my UMS unit. It's what we use to fight our enemies."

"What enemies? How'd you get here anyway?"

"Well, we were fighting the Misognians when they opened up some temporal gateway. Then everything went wrong and we all got

separated. We don't even know where everyone is."

"Misognians? Temporal-" Hilda was frustrated with the terms. "Just what the hell are you talking about?"

"The Boss said not to share that yet. We're here to gather up as many people as we can first. Then we'll find you people and explain the situation."

That only cooled Hilda's frustration, let alone not helping the confusion among the two visitors. They both sat on the ship's hull as Hiltrud contacted her Boss again.

"Say Boss, did we find everybody yet?"

"Almost everyone. Ami, Jack and Miclus are still MIA. I only hope we could find them in this place and time."

"You can't find them on the sensors?"

"Long range communications and sensors are down; they got damaged in the fight and subsequent crash. Getting the short-range ones functioning is already hectic."

"Okay...Hold on, let me see if I can help."

Hiltrud turned off the communications and put down her Vulcan gun before walking to the nearby duo.

"Excuse me, but do you have any communication devices?"

"Say what?" Hilda said while Vivian took out a smart phone.

"I have this," the dragon girl offered. "We just got long range communications back on, so we can contact people anywhere we wish."

"Thanks," Hiltrud disengaged the smaller of her two arms and released her hand to catch the phone. "I just need it for a sec."

* * *

><p>Another tense standoff came, sparked by the comments and emotions of the long, black-haired woman. Aside from that, the girl reminded them of the Norma's previous leader. They doubt she was a descendant or, if they knew the trio's situation, was the same girl from the past. She still reminded them of Jill's personality at the time, which was more than enough to spark aggression.<p>

But the surprising part was what came afterward. The fairy who hid behind the boy in the red uniform, who Tusk was interested in, jumped in front of the other two. She then projected a shining energy field of gold that temporarily blinded Ange and her comrades.

Emma responded to what she was seeing.

"M-Mana?"

"That can't be Mana," Salia denounced. "Mana's gone already."

"And that's definitely not the color of Mana," Ange added as she approached the field herself. She contacted shield herself, knowing the Norma's special ability, which felt completely solid to everyone's surprise. "And it doesn't simply break with a simple touch."

The two allies for the fairy were out talking against her.

"What are you doing?" the boy said. "Do you wanna get us killed?"

"Lower the field, Miclus," the women told her upon seeing Ange signaling her. "Besides, I think they want you to."

"I listen to only to Master Mitsu!" The fairy complained.

"Don't worry, we'll this on our own," Mitsu also got Ange's hand signals. "And besides, I don't think we wanna hurt us now."

"Yes, Master," Miclus deactivated the barrier and took a deep breath.

Ange then stepped forward.

"To begin with, who are you people? And what's with the rude awakening?"

The trio didn't even get time to start answering as a sound came from the circular device the Jill-look alike held. It was as if she received a signal from an ally, quickly taking the call.

"Hello?"

"Ami, are you there?" A young voice came out.

"Yes, Hiltrud. It's me." The name raised an eye from Ange and the two Norma lovers. "Did you get here okay?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean how long have you been there? Days? Months?"

"Just a few minutes, though we're encountering a bit of a problem. What about you?"

"We just recovered ourselves."

"So we're in the same time period after all," Mitsu commented, confusing the group nearby.

"Where are you?" Ami inquired.

"We were wondering that ourselves. A couple of natives who surprisingly speak our language say that we're in Japan and just knocked out one of their leaders. What about you?"

"We areâ€¦" Ami stalled. "We don't know yet, but we'll tell you when we do."

"Okay, the Boss says we demand a meeting with all the current leaders. The pairings said that Angelise is around?"

A reaction from Ange gave Ami her suspicions.

"I think we'll find her soon enough."

"Okay, can you ask her to accompany you on your way to ship? The Boss really wants to see you. And...so do the locals."

"I understand. Ami out."

Ami cut off the signal and she turned to the blonde in front.

"You sound like you all know Angelise, don't you?" Ami could see everyone turning their heads to the blonde woman in front of them. "Or perhaps, you _are_ Angelise, aren't you?"

"Just call me Ange for now," the woman retorted slightly. "But yes, that is me. The one you're looking for?"

Ami nodded.

"The Boss said to--"

"I overheard the conversation. You want us to meet with her, but you'll have to wait for while. You should start by telling me what the hell is going on here!"

Ami and Mitsu could see the question running through everyone else. Miclus was left shaking, but Ami responded.

"Take us to your place. And some people help carry our stuff. It's lot, yes, but we have a _lot_ to discuss."

* * *

><p>I'd like to point out that each of the UMS units are based off of ships and characters found in shoot em up games. You can say that when we get to the fighting, about each chapter would be those found in shmups. What I mean is that you'll have the story and waves of enemies. In the end, story relevant or not, there will a huge "Boss" just like in usual games.

I'll start off with the currently presented units.

_* Thunder (II), Jack's UMS, is based on the Raiden supersonic fighter from the famous _Raiden _games._

_* Miclus, Jack's "servant", is a Fairy, which also well known in the _Raiden _series and its spinoffs. I used the design from _Raiden III._

* Aether, Ami's unit, resembles the Ex-tio from the doujin game Ether Vapor.

* Strongarm, Hiltrud's unit, is based on the playable fighters from Einhander.

I'll get to the other three units soon enough.

And as you expected, yes, characters from Cross Ange will be getting theirs. I'll list them out here as well as their respective ship/character designs when I get to them. So far, I have a list of candidates: Ange (obviously), Salia, Hilda, Chris and Rosalie (together), Vivian, Ersha, Salako, Tusk, Momoka, and Emma (of all people- Well, she did fly a mail in the end, right?).

Again, I initiated UMS long before learning Rondo of Angel and Dragon. Therefore, character resemblances for Hilda/Hilturd and Ami/Jill/Alektra were complete coincidences. Hiltrud was designed after a character in another one of my projects. Ami is supposed to be a genderbent version of Luca Earlgrey, the pilot of the Ex-tio. Mitsu's based the normal anime heroes with short, light brown hair: examples are Tatsumi from Akame ga Kill, Haruto Tokishima from Valvrave, and Roy Beckett from another shmup game called Astebreed.

Perhaps you should find the other references to shmups games for any fans out there. To sarcastically start out, guess what Hilda was paying in the arcade.

Well, I guess you wait for the next chapter.

2. Chapter 2

Well, now we're off the next chapter. The one where we introduce more about UMS as HEXI does with the fighting girls of Cross Ange.

And in the process, we'll have a short battle that gives the feeling of what all battles in UMS are like.

* * *

><p>Four of the important crew of the HEXI walked cautiously through a tunnel, escorted by group of humanoid Dragons. Salako and her guards were up in the front while a couple of the Scuna covered the rear. The rear was quite disturbing as the female Dragons were bothered by the bugs following them. It didn't help that Kore was the one on the rear. Tasmin and Salon were by the sides, though they were told to keep their weapons on the Hexia as of their UMS units. Those were orders of the Boss, who was in front of the pack.<p>

After the little standoff, the three UMS users guided Salako to their leader, who was still within the bridge of the Boss. It surprised Salako how easygoing she was even after learning that they just knocked out Aura and crushed a few dragons in the crash. By saying it was something she expected, it nearly insulted the Dragons for such apathy. But she acted like she knew the Dragon would recover at some point, which added to their curiosity to how they know this. The Boss then accepted the Dragons' offer to meetup with the DRAGON leaders; she ordered Hiltrud to stay behind with her two new friends and watch over the rest of the crew.

For a while, the four have been walking in a tunnel that went into a mountain known as Fuji. Inside, they could what one called a huge nest. Salako discussed how the place where Dragons lived and bred while they cleaned up the mess of a war's aftermath. In one location

was their main destination, a conference table that the Boss suggested where they'd meet.

Opening up the doors to said conference room, they all found another girl by the mid right side of a long table.

"So it's just you?" Tasmin asked.

"Careful outsider," one of Salako's guards warned her. "Remember the woman you are taking to."

"I mean by no offense, ma'am," the Boss replied in a gentle tone. "It's a pleasure to meet you."

"It's fine," the girl greeted. "And so am I."

"Please take your seats," Salako told the guests before signalling the Scuna behind to leave.

The Hexia's captain went to sit directly opposite of the other girl. The UMS users followed suit as did the other Dragons. Kore sat left of her leader while Salako did so with her own. Tasmin and Salon sandwiched the two as did Naga and Kaname.

"I suppose there would be more than you?" the Boss inquired the hosts.

"Usually," Salako answered. "But with the mess you've made, nearly everyone is gone busy learning about the mess except for the our head princess."

"You're a princess yourself?" Kore asked.

"Both of us are. The ones between us are my guards, Naga and Kaname. I'm noble of the Freya family, Salamanidary, though you can call me Sala or Salako. Aura here is former supreme leader, now acting that position...once again."

"Aura?" Tasmin got confused. "Hold up, there are _two_ Auras?"

"A direct descendant," the other princess corrected. "As Supreme Leader, it was my wish to have the first Dragon brought home from the Mana users."

"So we've heard," the Boss understood.

"Explain," Kaname inquired.

"To begin with, we apologize for what happened to the Dragon. I assumed there were casualties when we made planetfall?"

"So far, we know little due to the lack of time for investigation," Salako briefed. "But we know that few acquaintances were in that area, so we'll need to search them while doing operations on your ship."

"As in analysis and recovery, I assume."

"Yes, but...we should really start with who you ladies are. Why are you here? And how did you Mana users find a way here?"

"To correct you, we are not Mana users," Tasmin spoke out, only to receive a glare from Naga across from her.

"Okay then, but that doesn't answer our question. How did you get here? And if you're not Mana users, then who are you?"

* * *

><p>The main trio of UMS pilots were following the group of women, approaching the Cafe Ange. Miclus was using gold Mana-like circles to carry the downed UMS units, though it put quite some strain on the fairy.<p>

"At least we have someone capable of carrying it properly," the boy said to himself, noting the immense power the fairy had.

The group of Norma escorting her were a little amazed by the young girl's ability to carry something so heavy. The ones specifically were Tusk, Emma, Momoka and Zhao Mei.

But Ange was very wary of the group; while she confirmed that they were not Mana users, she made sure of herself never to involve herself with Mana again. There was nothing wrong with Jack, who reminded him of the Tusk beside her. Miclus reminded of her past self, specifically her long blonde hair, cheerful idealist self, and once-thought ability to use Mana like any normal being. But she really had a sudden grudge with Ami, who was still glaring at her in a way Jill once did. But that didn't mean Ange was unwilling to ask a lot of questions to what's going on.

After reaching the all of the cafe, Jack signalled Miclus to lay down the UMS units upright against the wall. Miclus sighed in exhaustion.

"Ahh there," Jack spoke out what would've been Miclus's response before patting on her head. "In situations like this, it's always good to have someone like you."

Miclus let out a giggle and glomped Jack, much to his blushing. Even Tusk blushed over to Ange, who watched over the trio by the entrance.

"If it was so hard, then why don't you trying carrying them yourselves? Or do you know have that power of Mana within you?"

"Of course, we have the power," Jack said back. "We just need to save it for the UMS units."

"UMS?"

"The two machines you saw. We power the machines ourselves, so it's important to conserve it whenever we can."

"So you're not Mana users," Ange concluded. Knowing her knowledge, they manipulated Mana from an external source rather from "themselves".

Miclus quickly shook her head. "No! No! No! No! Mana users are bad! They're evil, they're stupid and they smell bad."

As Miclus made the hand gestures, Ange, Salia, Tusk and Emma were provoked to responding simultaneously.

"This isn't funny!"

"And I say you calm down," Ami said sharply. "I swear, as innocent you Norma are, you still let your emotions and scars create enemies when you don't need them."

Ange clenched a fist, but Tusk and Momoka held her shoulders to calm her down. Looking to both, Ange withdrew from her anger and got to the topic.

"In any case could you tell us what's going on."

"We will," Ami and the other two took seats on some large rocks. "But what you hear from us, please don't call this blasphemy. Because what you'll be hearing is quite similar, yet very outlandish."

"Try us," an elder woman known as Jasmine said with her arms folded.

"That's right," Ange imitated her. "Try making us believe you."

"Don't worry about it," Jack raised her hand. "We'll begin with some basics. To start withâ€¦"

And that began quite a long talk.

* * *

><p>"So what are you?" Vivian asked the Hilda look-alike.<p>

Hiltrud was sitting on the Hexia's hull with her Vulcan gun laid to rest beside her, yet still in her UMS unit. She was overlooking the other crewmembers, as well as the dragons on the ground and flying over them. The Boss said Hiltrud would only allow the two already on the ship so long as they didn't cause any trouble.

Like the others, they had questions that got Hiltrud's attention.

"Where did you all come from?" Vivian continued with her questions. "Are you aliens or something?"

"Something like that," Hiltrud responded. "Though how alien, I don't know."

"How did you people arrive here anyway?" Hilda joined in. "Are you Mana users?"

Hiltrud shook her head. "We're called Misognians nationally. Though you can say we're more of defectors against their society."

"Misognians?" Vivian repeated the word.

"Who the hell are the Misognians?" Hilda was bugged by that word.

"Don't say that _you're_ one. Are you sure that it's another name given to Mana users?"

Hiltrud let out a sigh.

"I think we should give the whole history of what's to come."

* * *

><p>Before the Boss went on to explain everything in their world, she asked the Dragons.<p>

"Where do you want us to start?"

"Whatever you believe is right," Princess Aura granted her.

And by then, the Boss began.

"To start with, we're part of a private military contractor force known as HEXI, whose sole purpose is to fight the military of a race called the Misognians."

"And they are?" Salako inquired.

The Boss generated a gray sphere of grey energy from the palm of her hand. Salako and her guards jumped for their chairs upon sight, which then disappeared as the Boss gripped her hand.

"Mana?"

"No. While having similar properties, this is what we call 'denmaku' or 'electric curtain'. The Misognians are a species that's coincidentally similar to the Mana users you once fought with. Beings who manipulate a type of energy to run an advanced society. Only that instead of taking it from a dragon such as Aura, we generate it through our own bodies, specifically from the nervous system. And as you see, I'm one of them."

"Why are you fighting against your own kind?" Naga asked.

"Because also unlike the Mana users, our kind has turned into an oppressive, military empire that has existed for centuries."

"Explain please," Salako was getting impatient with the wait.

Regardless, they all listened to the leader of HEXI.

"If you want to know our world existed, it goes far back when they were originally made. We don't know how long, but at least around a millennia ago, a galactic civil war erupted between a coalition of stars we only know as the Galactic Union. The main government fought upon states tempting secede the then stagnant Union for personal interests, propagandized as the "Empires". This war then escalated that resulted in the destruction of most of civilization. All communications between the stars were cut and much else long abandoned."

Such a thing left a distaste in the Dragons, reminding them of the war between the Unified Economic Federation and Pan-Continental

Alliance- also known as the D-War, World War VII and Ragnarok- made their new civilization in the first place.

"One of the survivors was a dormant, yet very hospitable planet where the Union were generating denmaku-generating super soldiers. Awakening long after the Union and Empires were gone, they came to forge society with the world they had now. Of course, they didn't start from the base level up as much equipment was still operational. One was that wasn't exactly electronic was a memo they found that labeled their project as the 'Microscopic Living Energy Project'. Based on what could only read, they referred to themselves as their place as 'Misogn', where their name 'Misognians' came from."

"Using what they could find, we Misognians spent the next few centuries shaping ourselves into an advanced society that involve pollution, war and toxicity like most other places. This became so much that we were the first ones to ever regain the ability to go into space."

That surprised the Dragon leaders for a bit. Going into space was nothing new as it was done long before the D-War. But using a dracium-level power to actually create a space civilization made them jealous. It didn't help that the Misognians had no enemies, allwoign them to create such civiliazation, whereas humanity was immediately at war with itself as soon as dracium was found.

"However," the Boss broke them about of their doze. "This is when things got really hectic to put it lightly. You see, even before their era of space travel and far-reaching expansion, even without being at war with itself, they still had a military force. The Misognian Armed Forces at the time was made when they began their civilization; their purpose was to give the purpose armed forces were supposed to do. To them, it was supposed to be different from the Armed Forces from the Union and Empires, who they assumed were used like weapons to stomp on political enemies. Their purpose was merely to protect Misogn: to prevent accidents, fight piracy and crime, safeguard the economic machine, defending people's rightsâ€|.Hence, they made to maintain order in the Nation of Misogn."

"I assumed that didn't go well," Kaname concluded, which gave the Boss a shake from her head.

"The purpose they intended was under assumption said before, that governments of the Union and Empires used their armies like tools to rain hell on one another. But they've only see on perspective. From what we mercenaries discovered, the brutality of the war came from the armies themselves, lead by their paranoid officers and those who merely wanted to fight. The Misognians were never taught and failed to learn the dangers of an unchecked military force and the atrocities they can commit, regardless how much is involved. Only traces began to emerge when it's been long since Misogn began expanding to stars."

"Centruy after century while being completely unaware of the danger, as Misogn expanded their space, so did their military. And while the Misognians had enough resources to sustain itself and were disciplined to respect each other, the Armed Forces were still greedy and hungry warfare. So much that they attack the first fully developed space civilizations they came across, those who didn't wield abilities like denmaku manipulation or what they called

civilization received the worst offenses."

Kaname watched at the other three guests.

"The others with you. They're victims of your armed forces, aren't they?"

"I am," Kore answered before bowing to Salako and Aura. "Please forgive me if I have introduced myself. I'm Kore, a Mushinin and Nymph-Princess of Mushi."

Salako and Aura bowed back with the latter saying.

"Pleased to meet you...Nymph-Princess."

Salako and Naga nearly blushed a little, almost realizing how their first encounter was in front of another princess. But Kaname was still confused.

"Mushinin?"

"They're a human race who can communicate with and control mutate insects found on their planet," the Boss explained as some bugs hovered around Kore to the Dragons' minor annoyance. "While they've formed a society together, the Misognians deemed them savage and attack them for sake of colonization. While we were able to help stop them, they were able to caused significant destruction to the planet."

"So horrible," Aura pondered over what kind of disasters the Misognians brought onto other worlds with their powers. Salako and Naga seathed their anger. Kaname only remained silent to shift to the two girls before them.

"And the other two?"

"We're part of a race the Misognians never bothered with," Tasmin responded both herself and Lambert. "To start with, I'm Air Colonel Tasmin Salon. Who you see on the other end is my wingman, Air Colonel Elizabeth Lambert. We have denmaku-like abilities like the Misognians, but they're varied by person to person and only exist in females. Long before the Boss came around, we were already sick of the Misognians' tyranny. After reaching our current ranks in our local planet's Air Force, we discharged ourselves so we could fight without getting our friends involved."

"And your Boss," Salako turned to said boss. "Who are you?"

"That name is classified for personal reasons," the Boss turned that question away. "But I'll declare that I'm the entitled leader of HEXI, which is not the Misognian Armed Forces. We are private contractors generated out the many that resulted from the overgrown military. When we learned what the Misognians were planning to do, we decided to come here to protect you."

"Well, that's very appreciative of you," Aura paused for a moment of uncertainty. "But...are you sure you'll be able to stop them."

"Of course, we will!" Lambert retorted. "We've fought these guys before, we can do it again!"

"That's my line!" Tasmin called from the other side while Naga and the Boss each put a fist down to silence them.

"The problem is," Salako pointed out. "This is very sudden and we just started diverting resources back to rebuilding our society. We not know in what ways we can assist, let alone repay you."

"We don't expect to be paid back or anything like that," the Boss assured to their surprise. "We're here because it said so."

"What said so?"

"History," the Boss materialized a virtual pad that she sent to hover by the Dragon princesses. "Feel free to check out the logs for yourselves."

"We already checked for records about the ship. Nothing came up."

"That's the point. The ship, our PMC, the never existed yet. Or I should say, not exist in your records yet."

"Exist yet. So you're sayingâ€¦"

* * *

><p>"Hold up! Hold up! Hold up!" Rosalie cut off a very similar talk. "You're saying, that you guys are from the future!?"

Jack, the one who talked before being interrupted, merely nodded. He just got over the Misognians' history and the purpose of HEXI's operation.

"From an alien world that's supplying the Mana users through the _military_?" Tusk added.

"That's right!" Miclus said.

"That can use Mana...as a _weapon_?" Emma froze at the thought.

"It's called _denmaku_," Ami corrected her. "But yes, in ways you Mana users and Norma can hardly believe."

"And what makes you think we'll believe that?" Ange exclaimed, prompting to walk forward.

"If we were really contradictory of ourselves, we wouldn't be like these people."

Ami raised up a pad similar to the smart phones Ange and the others recently received. Except it was flat and projected like a Mana screen. It played a video showing a huge ceremony going on with a grand stage with three officers belonging to the Misognian military.

"Fellow soldiers of Misogn and Mana, I welcome you all for your graduation to our nation's Armed Forces. And with it, we shall declare a moment of salvation against the injustice brought upon our

brothers! Against those who have abandoned them and left them to rot by human excuses known as the Norma, who have stolen their power that is a savage beast called the Dragon. They thought by warping themselves into a new world, they'd be safe from us. But not anymore.

Above showed a spherical gateway on the screens. In the center, it was generating what looked like a "Singularity" that linked to the True Earth.

"With the new gateway, formerly codenamed Umbilical Cord, this will be our chance to strike. On the other side, we shall invade their world and slaughter these traitors and heretics down to the last man. Misogn victors all!"

The video ended before any response from the audience could come out. Jack and Miclus could feel the Norma really enraged by those statements.

"Now considering the stability the so-called Mana users are in," Ami said as her cold word before the upcoming outburst. "It's clear these people are really going to take it hard on you."

"Abandoned, my ass!" Rosalie shouted.

"Injustice, my ass," Ange also spoke. "Those people deserve it."

"I don't know," Tusk began before he was deeply nudged in the ribs by Ange.

"Sorry," Jack said to Tusk before turning to the others who were in an outrage. He raised an arm to get everyone to listen, who followed until everyone was quiet again. "What you say is true. Ami and I can list the military's own atrocities."

Ami put it short enough while showing video footage of their crimes.

"Most of the Misognian Armed Forces are directly against opposition and races outside of their standards of 'civilized humans'. Foreign military forces were attacked preemptively under the false pretext of 'alien invasions'. Homes and lands were destroyed under 'bases' and areas of hostile activity. Items were confiscated as 'weapons' and 'dangerous threats', though this was more true than anything. But the worst is during these endeavors, they exaggerated casualties of hostile forces by not only slaughtering additional countless civilians and live animals, but also dismembering their bodies make them look like different people."

The last of those words made a few Norma feel very nauseous. Momoka wanted to look away, Emma nearly puked in her suit.

"And what makes us think we'll believe you?" the princess or Norma Empress still wasn't believing them, being ironic in her stance. "Why fight your own military for these atrocities?"

A photo came on the screen showing an older, bearded man in a white lab coat. Surprising them was a younger Ami by his feet.

"Because someone realized this and developed ways to counter it," Ami

answered. "My own grandfather, Manga Exti."

* * *

><p>"Manga Exti?" Vivian pondered over the name Hiltrud gave, who was following along another conversation.<p>

"According to Ami-san, he's her grandfather and the one responsible making the UMS units or what he called the Upward Maniac Shooters. He intended for the machine to solve the military crisis, but-"

"And let me guess, it didn't," Hilda inferred.

"Not...they way you may be thinking it. Because during the exhibition for such a machine, there was...an accident. On the planet Misognian world of Ketsui, a disaster occurred that claimed many lives, with people not knowing what happened. But because the pilots were young females, who were already known to have the highest potential of denmaku, the military took action to suppress them on a larger scale."

Hilda stood in anger, recalling similar scapegoating from the Mana users.

"What happened to him?" Vivian asked.

"I'm more concerned why he joined the military and developed those weapons in the first place," Hilda spoke louder.

"It's because he was a politician of some sort," Hilda recalled what Ami told her again. "He claimed it'll shrink the military size and eliminate the waste resources it's been using up. There was no doubt about it. According to one finding, he found not only the atrocities, but the number of projects and resources spent on it. Weapons that were impractical, strange, and frivolous. And that excludes extravagant luxuries the military officers put in such machines."

"But could they get away with that? Don't they have something to watch over it."

"Ami was told by her grandfather that Misogn's representative house potentially used to, but that was before the space era. At that point, the military already had full control over the legislative and judicial systems as well. He knew this long before he found his claims, which even after the disaster at Ketsui, named the Daioujou Incident, tried exposing to the public. Before he could be arrested and his work confiscated, he shared those claims through whatever networks he could find not Misognian and upload the specs and designs of the UMS units beyond their reach. After that, he committed suicide by going down with the destruction of his main lab. Ami thinks it's to keep the military from trying him for slander and denouncing his expose as libelous."

"Libelous and slander, may ass!" Hilda exclaimed, shocking the younger girls.

"It's what they say, but the fact we and the group HEXI are here disproves that."

Hiltrud stood up in her UMS unit. She made a fist with the large arm as she showed it to the pair.

"We wanna show that's not how a military should be. That's how nations and civilizations should be! Not how people should be!"

Vivian and Hilda both gave strong nods to her, which was returned with a friendly grin.

But that was cut short Hiltrud froze for a moment.

"What is it?" Vivian asked.

The Norma and Dragon looked up to the sky shortly after Hiltrud did.

* * *

><p>The explanations were finished between the Boss and the Dragons, which clearly put the latter group on the edge.<p>

"So what do you think?" the Boss asked of them.

"Tell me," Aura felt uncomfortable about what was going on. "You said that this'll take place in the future. When in the future?"

"Six month from now, maximum."

"What makes you so sure of this?" Salako asked them. "And prove you're not making this up to help these Misognians."

"Just wait until it's in the books, just like our user Mitsu says. If it's written then it'll be sure to happen."

A sudden shake went around the room again. This made the Boss clench her fists for once, but smirk thereafter, which made Naga wary.

"It isn't sooner, I hope?"

"I doubt it. Despite our rough landing, we seemed to have gotten our history right. And these are just stray dogs who followed us."

As the ground shook a little more, Salako stood up.

"I'm going out in the Enryugo, milady. Naga, Kaname, come with me-"

"No," aura told them to stand down. "This is their problem if what they say is true. And with that face, I think you have a solution."

"Of course. Hiltrud must be going out to engage them right now."

"We also have something else," Salako burrowed the virtual screen to check its features and alerts. She found a map revealing other unknown signatures, a significant number at a location that made her alert. "A huge chunk of them in the waters. They're attacking Arzenal!"

"Arzenal, eh? Well then, it looks like we found our two MIAs." the boss offered a hand. "Say, why don't we all head up to the surface and enjoy the demonstration of those three's UMS weapons?"

"The numbers seem too much for three units. You put that much faith in your pilots."

"Oh, they'll do it. You just see, they'll do it."

* * *

><p>The ground rumbled around the Norma girls and their guests and gusts of wind blew in their hair. They all looked up to the sky where clouds were blown away and holes similar to Singularities opened.<p>

And from there, many of their awaited enemies showed up, all having lines commonly of blue-green. Most of them were robotic discs and tiny twin-rotor gunship drones. The larger ships were the bigger problem. At least four were twin-engine transport aircraft similar to Mana transports but with more lines. A few similar twin-engine aircraft had twin chain guns and missile banks instead. Three were boxy with four thrusters below, four cannons on the front, missile banks on top and a large platform closed up in the back. Five of them were long delta wing aircraft that depicted as fighters, having two guns and a couple missiles.

The last was an even larger, longer, boxy delta wing airship that was reasonably a cruiser or command vessel. It had two gun turrets on the front and back on each of the eight box-like sections sticking out. The larger central section had five turrets with three guarding the rear and the other two beside the command bridge. Also lining along the aircraft were missile banks and dots were placed on the blue-green lines. And this was found on the bottom; the front had just as much while the front sealed what would be a huge energy cannon. The rear also emitted the light, which gave its levitation capability.

Also surround the machines were a bunch of civilians and soldiers hovering around them. The people on the ground who could see them interpreted them to be Mana users or Misognains mastering this power. How the Mana users regained this was a mystery for the Norma for now, but this wasn't something they were gonna wait out on.

"And I thought you said the invasion was gonna happen within a few months," Ange said to the male UMS user.

"I'm sure it's just the ones following us," Mitsu said. "The real invasion is yet to start."

"Still," Ami started falling back to the UMS units. "This isn't something they're gonna wait on."

"Right," Jack complied as Miclus followed them.

Ange took off her herself, leaving the crowd behind, except for Tusk and Momoka.

"Hey Ange!" Tusk called out to her.

"Angelise-sama!" Momoka joined the pursuit.

The others only watched as the their leader and escorts went off, leaving with the invading forces still calibrating what was going on.

It wasn't long before the invading forces detected the ancient island launch base that was Arzenal. Those in the aircraft and ships magnified scopes to zoom in where they found the girls watching over them.

"There you are," a few pilots said upon finding their location.

"Today we start the invasion," the commander within the assault cruiser declared. "All forces...FIRE!"

The lines on the manned ships glowed. Coming out of the lines were a huge spam of beams that erupt to a total of at least a hundred before they angled straight towards the island. Following was a barrage of gunfire, missiles and even more shots coming from the floating Mana users.

The trio of UMS users could clearly see all the shots heading straight towards Cafe Ange and the Norma.

"Miclus! Shield us!"

The fairy jumped in mid-air as she let her hands out. A large gold shield like before projected around everyone including the Arzenal residents, leaving them jerking around. They covered themselves as the enemy fire bombarded on the shield, shaking the ground while Miclus remained still. It was quite impressive in the eyes of Emma and Mei, watching all the fire impacting harmlessly on the shield.

Jack and Ami just got into the legs of their UMS units as the shaking continued. The fire had to stall for a moment before Jack could properly align himself onto the rest of the unit. After getting on right enough and starting the unit, Jack called out Ami.

"You ready?"

Ami said nothing as she immediately took off with the two extra drones following her. Miclus was starting to weaken, who Jack called out to next.

"Miclus! It's time!"

Miclus put her arms down upon hearing his master and lowered her arms. The gold shield disappeared as Ami cruised past the fairy. Projecting own blue shield of smaller size, she converged to the point where most of the fire was aimed at. Only some went past the shield and started hitting the ground. One barely scratching the roof and chimney of Cafe Ange, the other shook the Arzenal residents.

As Ami defended the ground at the best of her ability, the two drones outside of her shield counterattacked with a spray of their own beams. Unlike the blue-green ones that angled at their intended target, these smaller, blue beams made a curved path that homed in

through the barrage. Several awakened the fire by impacting on missiles diverting from Ami. The others traveled through the fire and starting blasting through the enemy targets. A few disc and gunship drones were shot down and a transport got damaged. Two hovering soldiers noticed the incoming lasers and moved to evade, but the beams homed in cleaved them through their arms and chest.

With the sudden losses, the invading fleet ceased fire. Upon noticing, Jack was hovering up above the restaurant, looking at the damage so far.

"They're sure gonna pay for this," Mitsu lamented as he turned to Miclus. "Let's those ladies down there what do, Miclus!"

Without a word, Miclus cheerfully flew to Jack and fused with his Thunder unit. The Thunder II transformed in front of the Norma, who were left bedazzled by the current display. As the transformation was nearing completion, the emitters on the legs were charging up energy. Going into Fighter Mode, a huge burst of speed rocketed the Thunder II into the sky with Ami's Aether.

Silence of awe could only be seen from the crowd, followed by wonderings of where Ange and her cohorts went.

* * *

><p>From what looked like Singularities near Fuji, several squadrons of aircraft came in with many smaller drones as escorts. Following them were transport craft, flying humans, and what looked like hovering cars and bikes with attached weapons on the back and side respectively. Leading them were three bulky flying wings: each having about 11 gun turrets on the top and bottom, with missile banks and bright dots along the blue-green lines that Hiltrud claimed was the Mana-like denmaku.<p>

The UMS user already took off upon seeing these invaders. Grabbing her Vulcan gun, the wings on her unit sprouted and propelled her into the air. Huge Dragons soared past her to engage the intruders, but they became unpleasantly surprised as a stream of lasers came in. One Scuna had both of her eyes pierced, effectively killing it. More streams cut through the Dragons' wings and laid critical hits onto their bodies. Not even the larger males, specifically a few Brig and Galleon Dragons stood no against the firepower thrown at them. Their counterattacks were also poor with a witnessing Hiltrud seeing familiar magic circles that shot beams and orbs of energy at their targets. Though some reach to hit the escort drones and Mana users, the larger ships remained unscathed. That was without mentioning how little power it was compared to the beams and shots of denmaku or the guns and missiles following them.

Hiltrud was up in the air as her Strongarm unit stopped its ascension. She already found her in a shower of blood from the falling corpses of the Dragons. That was before being targeted by enemy fire as well, for which Hiltrud evaded.

Moving to the right, the UMS user wielded her Vulcan gun and began firing on the missiles homing in on her. One got close enough to push her back, only to use the force to her advantage by cruising through the next barrage of weaponry and advancing on the enemy fleet.

Against another set of denmaku fire from one of the larger gunships, Hiltrud blocked it with her huge arm after putting her Vulcan gun away. She then responded with a fierce, spinning punch that smashed through the cockpit seat and out of the rear, leaving the aircraft exploding in flames.

Stopping to get her balance, she found herself surrounded by the smaller drones and soldiers. One Mana user soared towards her, only to get smashed to bits by Hiltrud's powered arm. She raised her other arm to fire a built-in machine gun at the hovering drones. She made a flip to avoid another set of fire while stopping behind two more hovering soldiers. Firing beams that knocked away the larger arm, Hiltrud responded with her gun by firing several shots into both men. She also looked up to see a circular drone descending on her, responding with two more machine guns on the shoulders.

Through the shower of smoke and debris, Hiltrud took out her Vulcan gun. After a slow turn on, the spinning barrels wreaked havoc on soldiers and drones in a short line. She slowly turned her unit around to destroy two more discs and a bike behind them with its driver.

A barrage of denmaku and gun fire then rained from the cruisers above. Accelerating away from the beams, Hiltrud focused only on the enemies in front of them. She fired barrage through two more bikes that attacked her with machineguns and transport aircraft that fired beams at her. Hiltrud covered herself against the beams as the transport went down.

One soldier cut through the door of the burning transport and soared himself with a long blade of denmaku on his arm. Hiltrud, distracted by two more gunship drones firing shots at her, caught a glimpse of the enemy soldier. She put her Vulcan gun in front to defend, which the denmaku cleanly cut apart. As he went in for another attack, Hiltrud activated the two guns on her shoulders to blast him apart.

Seeing her Vulcan gun barrel destroyed, she held it out with her right hand. After a powerful blasted hit from the sky, she was flown to the opposite direction. She sighted upon the shooter, a long hovering car with a cannon on its platform. She threw the handle that was left at the car, making the drivers dodge. The remaining piece only dented it by the side, but Hiltrud soared through the shots of fire on the side to get close. Firing her arm's gun at drivers, killing them both and destroying their controls, the levitation devices below malfunctioned. Before losing altitude, she took the huge cannon on top of the platform with her mech arm.

Flipping to stop her acceleration, she hovered with her new cannon in tow. Taking aim, she fired a shot against another transport and it blowing to smithereens. She also fire on the larger delta-wing fighters on the side before it could react. There was retaliation from the larger ships above, forcing her to cruise above. A cruiser tried to turn hard left, but Hiltrud ignored it, flipping on top of the other cruiser in front. On part of the engine, safe from the other ship's turrets for now, Hiltrud fired several more cannon rounds against the rear cruiser that continued its turn. Hitting it several times on the side, a light on the aircraft went showing that one of the engines was failing. After firing a few more shots, she

left the cruiser exploding with its remains crashing below.

The ship she was on started turning as well, making Hiltrud lose balance and fall off. Though the lights emitted to keep the ship afloat weren't gonna kill her, Hiltrud still accelerated back up. The turrets took aim, forcing her to avoid their fire. She managed to get a few shot against the guns before a beam cut through it, nearly cutting off the arm using it. The UMS user thrust to the right as angling beams traced her movements. She then changed trajectory back to the ship with more gunfire in the way.

Landing on the end left section of the ship, close to the rear turret, Hiltrud smashed the turret by its moving joint. She grabbed hold of the double-barreled turret, which was small enough to wield thanks to its automated mechanism. Wielding the firing mechanism, she got a good feel of the weapon as she fired its cannons against the other turrets targeting her. After destroying the turrets on top of the left wing, she moved to hit the rear itself. Upon sensing one of the lights glowing beside her, she used the commandeered turret as a shield her from a fountain of denmaku that erupted. She was pushed back, but not too far off and regained her balance easily. Feeling the turret's mechanisms still working right, Hiltrud responded with two more blasts at the denmaku spot before firing a few more at the rear. She got distracted again, but this time by missiles fired right at her. She back up a bit before they landed, which threw her off the ship instead of destroying her. Leaning back while falling, she fired a few more twin shots at the ship before it finally broke up into three exploding pieces.

The Strongarm flipped backward to stop its descent with the wings and legs' emitters. Circling the airspace, there weren't many enemy ships left beside a few fighters and the last warship. The latter was starting to descend down, which caught the girl's eye upon noticing something carried below. She also found more of the invaders on the ground that were attacking the lands and Dragons below.

She got distracted by two fighters that fired bursts of ammunition and more denmaku beams. After firing her new weapon to destroy one, a beam got her in the other arm, making her go on the defensive. Blocking the next few shots with few shots with the turret, she peeked above it to fire her shoulder guns. The shots only graze a wing as the pilot evaded and fire more burst as at her. Forced to go the defensive, Hiltrud jerked to the right and fired two loaded shots, both hitting the fighter right in the center and destroying it.

The distraction allowed the other cruiser to descend more to the ground. With little time before it enters the fight, she transformed the Strongarm into Fighter Mode. Attaching her left arm to the side and disconnecting her right arm that lined up on her back, she grabbed onto the throttles in front of her and punched it down to the surface.

* * *

><p>The fight against the Misognian and Mana invaders was more manageable. With two (or three) UMS units and their users fighting, the speed with they were being cleaned was cut by that much.<p>

Thanks to the upgrades on the Thunder, Jack fired many bullets that covered a very wide arc where he fired them. In his humanoid Battle Mode, he sprayed out bullets from the guns that grew on the arms, legs and wing of the main body on his UMS. Adding to it were a barrage of small homing missiles coming from his back. All of them sought out the waves of drones, soldiers and the moderate-sized transports and gunships. Few of them had time to evade the onslaught.

Those that did were mostly soldiers who engaged him in close quarters. While defending with his shields and arms, he could see the bloodlust coming from the Mana users attacking him. It wasn't too new as he found his on the mission to get to the gateway, but something didn't feel right about them. It didn't feel natural and he could see it with their eyes glaring colors. Against these people, he blasted them through the torso and then carried the top halves of their corpses before descending down.

As for Ami, she was in Fighter Mode, pursued by the boxy aircraft that launched missiles after missiles against her. She was tracking the barrage of missiles, firing lasers to destroy them once she locked on. She swerved left and right to break pursuit, including a barrel roll to avoid some beams and make a few missiles destroy each other. She then worked an Immelmann to turn the unit around while blowing apart the wave of missiles from behind. Facing one of the boxy aircraft that was turning towards her, Ami charged concentrated energy for its front cannon. A shot from the cannon blew through the ship as Ami went through the exploding wreckage.

The other two identical ships fired much their missiles within the next few seconds, one of them additionally firing its cannons at the Aether. Ami rolled twice more to avoid the fire before charging else in the unit. When a fighter craft fired its beams and guns from behind, the Aether projected an instantaneous blue shield at a wide radius. All beams were absorbed or destroyed in the vicinity and the fighter behind turned away. The UMS took care of him by locking onto him and firing a set of lasers to destroy it. She then soared upward at a high altitude as all the missiles pursued her. With a barrage of denmaku and project fire coming from both directions, Ami completed a tail slide to make the shots hit each other. It came down by firing its cannon again against another boxy aircraft before stopping. She took the time to transform into her Battle form in front of the third as it turned to her with cannons loaded.

The, the aircraft suddenly got cut down diagonally. The two pieces split before exploding. When the smoke cleared up in front of the covering Ami, she found a humanoid mecha wielding a sword in front of her.

She heard a voice coming from some kind of speakers.

"You think I'm letting you get the credit for everything?" The mecha put away its sword. "After all, I'm supposed to be responsible for defending this place."

Ami turned away while Jack approached the huge mecha.

"So this is the Villkiss," he examined. "A pretty neat machine like it said."

"Neat?" the pilot said. "See what you thinkâ€|" she paused over the massive flying wing floating above. "After dealing with them."

Accompanying the large command were the remaining forces that fired a barrage of beams at the trio of machines. The UMS units related with shields, but the mecha stayed put. Turning from its armor red to the surprise of the UMS pilots, the Villkiss's Michael Mode emitted a field around itself. All bullets and missiles impacted onto it harmless as it drew out a large, long blade of energy. Against set of fighters coming into intercept, the Villkiss swung the long blade to slice them apart, taking another swing against a few wave of drones and soldiers firing at her.

The Villkiss then got hit by denmaku beams, which were surprisingly more effective. While not tearing through arms and limbs, it was still able to pierce through the barrier enough to dent and push it. Upon seeing this, the beams converged more onto her, making the pilot really agitated.

Jack and Ami entered in their units, moving their shields to defend the mecha. As the robot regained balance in the air, its hands signaled out them to back away. Hearing a singing voice, they had an idea of what it was and they moved out of the way make room.

The Villkiss turned itself gold as soon as the enemy barrage stopped. Opening up two huge cannons from its shoulders as they charged up, Ange pressed the button to fire while shouting.

"Eat this, you monstrous scum!"

Two huge pillars fired from the shoulders that went through the atmosphere. Showing images of alternate selves, including the UMS pilots, the pillars consumed all that came into its place. Turning the Villkiss as well, Ange caught every Misognian craft and hovering soldier, completely erasing them from physical existence. The massive command ship above lost its entire rear as it came crashing down. It glowed bright and exploded into nonexistence.

The three defending machines waited for any more fire, whether from the Misgonians or the Mana users. After a minute of nothingness, Jack threw his arms down.

"I think that's all of them."

"For now, at least," Ange turned to the Thunder unit. "And what did you think I was gonna do?"

"This is something way more than that hunk of machinery of yours," Ami butted in.

"Hunk!?" The Villkiss raised its sword. "Do you even realise what kind of weapon you're facing?"

"I am. And I'm saying regardless, you need an upgrade."

"You-"

"Settle down, you two!" Jack called to them both. "Besides more of

them coming, we need to meet with our ship."

"He's right, Angelise-sama," Momoka suddenly called inside the vehicle. "We have more important matters. Think of what's happened to Cafe Ange below."

With that, the Villkiss withdrew its sword.

"Fine then, we'll listen to you for now. And- Tusk! Watch what you're sitting on!"

"What, what am I sitting on? Hey, hey!"

The Villkiss jerked around as it descended back onto the ground. The UMS units followed suit for escort.

* * *

><p>Hilda and Vivian were in a bad spot. Hearing the declared date when the invasion would happen, they thought they could relax for a bit, but they were dead wrong.<p>

When the Singularity-like portals warped in with the combined Mana and Misognian invasion force. Although their UMS protector immediately dispatched to engage them, a large number of them got to the ground safely. They even saw the dragons get shot out of the sky before they could even get close.

Forced to take action, the two girls slid off the crashed Hexia and went through the streams and barrages of enemy weaponry that tore through the little town and its inhabitants. Arriving at another locale, they boarded flying motorcycles, the same transforming vehicles that Ange had. Hilda's was a black with green markings called the Theodora, one of the few labeled "Ragna-mails". Vivian's was a pink, thinner copy called a Razor, which was additionally a knock off of Hilda and Ange's units called a "Para-mail".

For now, the two focused on defending the streets below from the enemies who came in from below. Despite being smaller in number and sizes, the invading forces were powerful enough to mow through the Dragons. Seeing another Brig and a few Scuna cut with ease, it pained Vivian greatly to start first.

Vivian was well managed for the fight against the larger units thanks to its small design and high mobility. The mobility made it more ideal for dodging the denmaku beams that came after her. And seeing how they operated, angling only once after a moment, it gave her time to dodge perfectly. When one attack came after her, Vivian sidestepped for moment- in the air so they didn't hit anyone behind- and took out a boomerang that cut through one of the transport ships. Two gunships of the same size opened fire with their chain guns, which were able to scratch the Razor's shoulder. She retaliated with a submachine gun to blow up both of them, sending very small pieces down below.

The missiles and drones were the harder part as Vivian received fire from them. That's when Hilda came in with a bulkier frame. Turning red into its own Michael Mode, the Theodora took the fire with ease. While using her own rifle to blow up the drones and gunships at long range, Vivian took cover behind her to provide submachinegun

support.

Something else that caught their eye were not only the Mana users regaining their powers, but also fighting just their powers only. They even charged right after the Mails as they barraged against them with their recovered power. Hilda had no qualms slicing them in half, but still...

What are these damn people thinking? Are they freaking suicidal?

The number of enemy forces were already dwindling. Enough that a few more Scunas joined in the fray with a Brig and Frigate. The female Dragons chomped on the drones and soldiers while the males did with the larger vehicles. What remained of said vehicles was another gunship and fighter that fired upon the Brig. The Frigate dragon covered its wounded brother as they both charged to fire its ranged attacks, destroying both.

Unfortunately, the fight was still not over. Taking a few deep breaths, Hilda looked up to see many of the burning wreckage still in the air, all she assumed were wiped out by Hiltrud above. As astonished as she was, she was distracted by the larger craft that was descending. Although she could see a light that was the Strongarm pursuing it, the large craft dropped something that falling on their location.

"Spread out!" Hilda shouted as both Vivian and the Dragons listened to her.

When the large object crashed onto the ground, dirt and broken asphalt was thrown into the air. The larger objects shook a little and the pilots of the mails held on tight to their controls. When the rumbling subsided, Hilda looked through the screens and windows to observe the weapon that just fell.

Only the lines of the machine were shown at first, this one having warmer colors, particularly red and yellow. As the dust settled, it revealed itself as a walking machine about as big as a Brig Dragon. There were lights on top that showed itself as a police unit. The top by the back where the legs were was a hatch assumed to be a pilot seat or weapons bay. It had bulky armor fit with machine guns and two autocannons at the front, which also had some kind of huge claw. If it had something resembling wings and a tail, it would resemble a dragon itself with the claw machine as its head.

The Dragons and the two Mails encircled the dragon-like unit as it activated. The lights started glowing more which put the combatants on the edge.

Facing Hilda and Vivian from its original position, the huge vehicle stood up against the Mails. It said something in a dark, robotic voice. It was also in a different language, which only Hilda could understand, as it called out.

"DIES IST EINE WARNUNG! ENTALDEN SIE ALLE IHRE WAFFEN!"

It may have been a while since she used the language back in the Enderant Union where she hailed from, but she understood well what it saying. She responded by pointing her beam rifle.

"Not a chance, tin can!"

The Theodora blasted onto the armor of the bipedal machine, knocking it to the side. Though it took clear signs of damage, it still shrugged off the shot like it was nothing. Vivian jumped away from Hilda to diverge the machine from the side, firing her gun at the machine. The robot responded by opening its hatch. Out came a missile launcher as Hilda once guessed, firing multiple that began homing against the weaker Para-mail. Vivian focused on the missiles while the Frigate-class Dragon took some of the hits for her.

Hilda assisted with more shoots against the front armor, which was firing its projectiles at her harmlessly. The Brig Dragon hit its left side before charging lightning attacks at point blank range. As the guns shot away from Hilda, the lines on the left side glowed to fire denmaku beams of the same color, blasting away the Brig dragon. This gave the Frigate and Hilda to fire more attacks, effectively destroying the machine's frontal armor.

Vivian took the time to fly over the Frigate dragon, flipping while bombarding the top with machinegun fire and missiles. The bipedal walker opened up its hatch again to fire its own missiles, but Hilda blasted the pod away. The punishment it took force the machine down on the ground. Vivian faced the front of its claw, trying to shoot it apart with Hilda, but only made to get a plating off.

In response, the recovered machine raised its claw up and projected some kind of field underneath. Vivian struggled on the controls all of a sudden.

"I-I can't move!"

Then, Razor started moving towards the bipedal machine. As much as she wanted to help, Hilda's Ragna-mail was being pulled in, too. But because of the Razor's light weight and closer distance, it was pulled in first onto the field.

Now Vivian found herself attached to the dragon-like robot, which could slam its claw at any moment.

"Vivian!" Hilda called out to her. "Get the hell out of there now!"

While the robot raised its claw a little more, Hilda could see a change going inside the Mail. Burst through the cockpit, Vivian in her Dragon form broke out enough to escape her doomed Razor. She flew back to the Theodora as the machine slammed the Razor onto the ground and crushed it.

To help Vivian escape, the other Dragons intervened. The remaining Scuna attacked on all sides while the Frigate and Brig charged its attacks. Hilda also responded by firing against the lines of denmaku, but it was no use. A beautiful display of beam attacks cut through all the Dragons, hacking them apart to the horror of Vivian who was receding back to her human form. The Theodora raised a shield to protect itself, but the machine bombarded it with the same weapons assisted by similar rapid shots of denmaku. Hilda was able to hold it, but was rethinking her options, discounting the Ragna-mails' special weapons from the equation for its firepower.

Damn it, how strong is this thing?

As Hilda continued to defend against the bombardment, a flash of light erupted above. With the last cruiser burning in the sky, Hiltrud was finished with about all the enemy forces in the sky. She also noticed that all those on the ground were destroyed as well. Now all that remained was the huge "boss" that Mitsu liked to call.

Hiltrud's entrance into the fight was both welcoming and dynamic with two blasts to the head. As the walking vehicle tried to recover, Hilda dropped her shield to fire two more blasts of her own. With the machine distracted, Hiltrud smacked down on its claw breaking the magnet and releasing the remains of Vivian's Razor. As a few beams crossed each other in missing Hiltrud, the young girl grabbed the claw's arm and ripped it off, leaving it screeching like a dragon itself.

With the damaged walker leaning, Hiltrud flew up to the Theodora's cockpit seat.

"Are you okay? Everyone alright."

"It's about time," Hilda let out. "Though you're too late to save Vivian's Para-mail."

"At least you're okay enough, so-"

"Watch out!"

The bipedal just flipped its head over, opening up what looked like a huge cannon. Hilda knocked the little UMS units out of the way and raised her shield up. The walker fired a huge pillar of energy that pushed back the Theodora before actually breaking through its defenses. The shoulder and wing on the left side was destroyed as the Mail fell to the ground.

Upon seeing her ally get knocked down, Hiltrud cruised to the side. As the head of the machine went upright, beams of denmaku fired upon her. Hiltrud laid low as she picked up what looked like a missile pod from the walker, finding the firing mechanisms very easily. She fired a barrage at this enemy, aiming for the denmaku line. As Hiltrud went onto its right, Vivian in her Dragon mode knocked the left side to knock off its aim. Opening its platform to fire more missiles, Hilda recovered to fire her beam weapon again and destroy it. Hiltrud proceeded to fire more missiles at the walker, destroying the denmaku lines on the other side.

The trembling walker flipped itself again, this time accompanied by turret that extended above and fired on Vivian. Vivian suffered a minor wound on her right wing, but fell to the ground to avoid further attacks. A little tower then attacked Hiltrud, who launched missiles to blow it apart. Hilda jammed her sword into the machine, just as it was charging its butt's energy cannon.

With one final animalistic screech, the walker collapsed onto the ground. But Hiltrud signalled them all to get away. As electric sparks surrounded the downed walker, all those nearby escaped a safe enough distance. First glowing, the walker released a huge explosion

that sent pieces and smoke everywhere.

Hiltrud regrouped with Hilda's Theodora and Vivian, now back in her human form. The Ragna-mail still pondered over the walking weapon they took down, which she recalled came from the same game she played recently.

* * *

><p>No wonder why this looked so familiar.

As the trio got together, there were more witnesses looking down on the scene. The four Dragon leaders, as well as members of HEXI overlooked the devastation and destruction of the current lands. Aura froze at the sight while Salako and her guards watch over in silence. The Boss only said.

"Told you they could do it."

"Yes," Kaname agreed. "But you're missing the destruction."

"This is-" Naga spoke before changing her thoughts. "No, not even Embryo tore through our home like this."

"There'll be more than this for sure. Just be happy we're able to minimize the damage."

"Why so calm? And you said this was only a small fleet?"

"If you're prepared to fight them, we can save as much as possible. I don't worry too much about consequences."

The destruction already left a bit of bad taste. Mana users were one thing, fighting machines was another, but the Misognians put the two together. For one thing, it was already obvious that a full invasion was gonna destroy the whole Dragon race if it wasn't for their help.

Salako first thought they'd be manageable with her Enryugo and their guards' other vehicles, but after seeing an actual battle with them, she started second guessing otherwise.

"And tell me. How are those other two UMS units you mentioned?"

"They're fine. But I prefer we bring them back to the ship. You said they were in Arzenal?"

"I'll call Ange to bring them here then."

"I prefer all the residents on that island. Bring all the Norma here as well. It's high time we provided your men some toys. And some retraining."

"...I understand."

So, there we go. With a small fleet of Misognian forces causing trouble, though the Ragna-mails handled them easily, you'd have to imagine the kind of fights even they'd be in against an even larger fleet. That excludes the help from HEXI's forces, which more the

reason why the True Earth inhabitants will need to adapt to their weapons._

_The "boss fight" Hilda, Vivian and their UMS friend encountered is pretty much a boss already made. It's pretty much the __**SPKB-O3 DRACHE**__, a heavy police unit that's the first boss in Einhandler. Just add a magnetic field with its claw and energy beams and bullets used by the Misognians._

When I get to the next chapter, there'll be some revelations that are required for this story. And from there, I'll introduce more about the UMSs as the chosen pilots learn how to use them.

That's all for now. Signing off.

End
file.